

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with James L. Reed on 6/3/08.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus to plasma coat a stent, comprising:
a mandrel supporting a stent;
a first plasma member circumscribing the mandrel, the first plasma member being grounded and the mandrel being supported as a cantilever from the first plasma member;
a second plasma member circumscribing the first plasma member;
a plasma generating source in communication with the second plasma member;
a first horizontally disposed plate member in communication with the first plasma member;
a second horizontally disposed plate member positioned over the first plate member and in communication with the second plasma member; ~~and~~
a third plate member, wherein the second plate member is adjacent to, and in communication with a proximal end of the second plasma member and the third plate member is adjacent to, and in communication with a distal end of the second plasma member; and

an insulator disposed between the first and second plate members to electrically insulate the plate members;

wherein the mandrel extends from the first plate member into the first plasma member and through an opening formed in the second plate member.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the plasma generating source is a radio frequency generating source ~~or a microwave generating source.~~

Claims 10-14, 24-28: Cancelled.

29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein a substantial portion of the stent mandrel is disposed between the second and third plate members ~~, and the insulator is disposed between the first and second plate members.~~

Claims 30, 32-38: Cancelled.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-7, 17-23, 29 and 31 allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claim1: Closest prior arts [(Usai et al –US 5,591,268), (Jacob -US 5,087,418), and (Malik et al – US 6,504,307)] do not teach claim limitation “a third plate member, wherein the second plate member is adjacent to, and in communication with a proximal end of the second plasma member and the third plate member is adjacent to, and in communication with a distal end of the second plasma member; and

an insulator disposed between the first and second plate members to electrically insulate the plate members;

wherein the mandrel extends from the first plate member into the first plasma member and through an opening formed in the second plate member”, in the context of remaining limitations of the claim.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to RAKESH K. DHINGRA whose telephone number is (571)272-5959. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 -6:00 (Monday - Friday).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Parviz Hassanzadeh can be reached on (571)-272-1435. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Rakesh K Dhingra/
Examiner, Art Unit 1792

/Parviz Hassanzadeh/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1792